

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Final Office Action dated August 2, 2006, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on November 2, 2006. Claims 1 - 9 and 19 - 31 remain pending in the application. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Statement of Substance of Interview

On September 18, 2006, a telephonic interview was held between Walter C. Grollitsch and the Examiner. The parties discussed the cited reference *Park* (US 3,220,481). Claims 27 and 30 were also discussed.

An agreement was reached during the interview. The amendments made herein are believed to be consistent with the agreement reached during the interview. Allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claim 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Park*, U.S. 3,220,481. In response, Applicants have amended claim 27.

As amended, claim 27 includes the limitation of actuating an object stopping assembly, thereby slowing the rate of descent of the object as it approaches a closed downhole deployment valve by using the object stopping assembly. *Park* does not disclose actuating an object stopping assembly to slow the rate of descent of an object as it approaches a closed downhole deployment valve. Rather, *Park* merely discloses a sleeve (35) that includes a seat (61) that is configured to stop a ball (60) (see *Park*, Figures 1 and 5). More specifically, the seat (61) of the sleeve (35), as disclosed in *Park*, is fixed and therefore cannot be actuated in order to stop a ball (60). As a result, *Park* does not teach or suggest the limitation of actuating an object stopping assembly to slow the rate of descent of an object as it approaches a closed downhole deployment valve.

As the foregoing illustrates, *Park* fails to teach or disclose all the limitations of claim 27. This failure precludes *Park* from anticipating claim 27. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the 102(b) rejection of claim 27 be removed and the allowance of

the same. Additionally, claim 30 depends from 27 and this claim is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 27.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicated that claims 1, 2, 7-9, and 24-26 are allowed. Applicants appreciate allowance of these claims.

The Examiner objected to claims 28, 29, and 31 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicants have rewritten claims 29 and 31 as new claims 32 and 33, respectively. Therefore, Applicants believe that new claims 32 and 33 are in condition for allowance and respectfully request the same. Additionally, claim 28 depends from claim 27 and this claim is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 27.

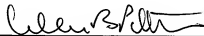
Withdrawn Claims

Claims 3 and 4 were withdrawn during the prosecution of the case. However, since claims 3 and 4 depend from allowable generic claim 1, these claims should be reinstated and allowed for at least the same reasons as allowable generic claim 1. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the withdrawn status of claims 3 and 4 be removed and allowance of these claims.

Conclusion

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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